

PRINTING IN CHINA.

Every newly ascertained fact respecting printing has an importance for the world; and although the progress of the art in China is entirely unconnected, we believe, with its progress in Europe, it is interesting to know what the Orientals had already done in the way of the multiplication of works of art at a time when monks in the West were toiling at the reproduction of manuscripts.

MM. Julien and Champion go beyond M. Klaproth, and say that Europeans might have known printing 40 years before they did but they had been in relation with China 70 years before the commencement of the seventh century.

According to a Chinese encyclopedia, entitled "Po-tong-pien-lan," book xxxi, fol. 10, which cites an earlier work, called "Pi-tsong," printing with wooden blocks commenced in the reign of the Soui as early as 581 A. D.

Between the invention of wooden blocks for printing and that of movable types came printing from stone—an invention believed to be unknown hitherto to the missionaries and savants of Europe.

Towards the end of the Thang dynasty, about the year 804 A. D., the idea of using stones for reproduction arose, and texts were cut for this purpose, with the characters reversed. In this case the proceeding was the opposite of the former: the characters were incised, and the stones were printed with white on a black ground.

was inked to lay the paper upon it and pass the hand over the back of the sheet; at present the Chinese use a brush for the same purpose, and thus produce far more perfect impressions.

No record seems to have been found of the manuscripts thus reproduced; but in the cyclopaedia entitled "Tehi-pou-to-ehi" is embodied a work in two books, in which is a minute description of all the antique inscriptions and autographs of celebrated men reproduced in the manner described, that is to say, in white on a black ground, between the years 1143 and 1243 of the Christian era.

When Pi-ching died, his companions, or partners, inherited his types, and preserved them with great care; but the invention fell out of use. And this is not surprising, when we consider the nature of the Chinese language, for, in order to be able to print all kinds of works, it would have been necessary to have 100 cases, that being the number of sounds in the tonic arrangement.

It was not until after 1662 that another change took place. In the reign of the Emperor Kiang-hi certain missionaries, who enjoyed credit with that monarch, induced him to cause 250,000 movable types in copper to be engraved, which were used for printing a collection of ancient works, which formed 6000 volumes, in 4to.

In the year 1778, the Emperor Kien-long decreed that 10,412 of the most important works in the Chinese language should be engraved on wood and printed at the cost of the State, but the Minister of Finance, Kien-kien, seeing the enormous number of blocks that would be required and the immense expense that would be incurred, succeeded in persuading the Emperor to adopt the system of movable types, and submitted models of those required, arranged on sixteen plates and accompanied by all the necessary instructions for the cutting of the dies, the striking of the matrices, the founding of the type and the composition.

The result of the decree was the establishment in the Palace of Pei-yang of an edifice known as the Wen-ying-tien, in which a considerable number of works were printed every year by means of movable types, which were received from the Emperor himself, it is said, the elegant appellation of tsin-tchin, or assembled pearls. The editions there printed are of remarkable beauty. Unfortunately, the establishment has recently been burned down.

might be found all-efficient for large and special characters. Such is the history of the revolutions which the art of multiplying documents has undergone in China during some twelve centuries.

The City of Books. There is something touching in the terms in which the printers of Leipzig, in the year 1640, expressed their intention to celebrate the bi-centenary of the invention of printing. Germany was then in the depths of woe and devastation on account of the Thirty-years' War, but nevertheless they resolved to have a jubilee, "to thank God for this benefit, and in friendly talk to take a drink and fragrant meal in stillness."

As to the amount of actual publishing work done in Leipzig, we learn from the German statistical account before us, that it amounts to about one-sixth of that done in all Germany, including Prussia and Austria. Thus in 1868 twelve thousand works were published in Germany (4300 was the number for England in the same year); of these about 2000 would be the number emanating from Leipzig.

All the branches of industry auxiliary to the making of books flourish in Leipzig. In Leipzig seven printing establishments now exist in Leipzig and its suburbs, employing 1000 journeymen, 300 apprentices, and 450 women. Within the last ten years, too, there has been a great improvement in the book-binding trade.

Leipzig is the principal centre for musical publications, not only in Germany, but throughout the musical world. There are twenty-nine publishers in this department, of which the firm of Breitkopf and Hartel stands highest. Roder's, which is the greatest house for musical note engraving, keeps 140 persons at work. The second-hand or antiquarian business is very important.

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PROPOSALS.

PROPOSALS FOR STAMPED ENVELOPES AND WRAPPERS. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT, January 10, 1870.

Sealed Proposals will be received until 10 P. M. on the 1st day of MARCH, 1870, for furnishing all the "Stamped Envelopes" and "Newspaper Wrappers" which this Department may require during a period of four years, commencing 1st July, 1870, viz.:

No. 1. Note size, 3 1/2 by 4 1/2 inches, of white paper. No. 2. Ordinary letter size, 3 1/2 by 5 1/2 inches, white, buff, cream, or cream-colored paper, or such proportion either as may be required.

No. 3. Full letter size (ungummed on flap, for circulars), 5 1/2 by 7 1/2 inches, of the same colors as No. 2, and under a like condition as to the proportion of each.

No. 4. Extra letter size (ungummed on flap, for circulars), 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches, of the same colors as No. 2, and under a like condition as to the proportion of each.

No. 5. Official size, 5 1/2 by 5 1/2 inches, of same colors as No. 2, and under a like condition as to the proportion of each.

No. 6. Extra letter size (ungummed on flap, for circulars), 5 1/2 by 8 1/2 inches, of the same colors as No. 2, and under a like condition as to the proportion of each.

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PROPOSALS.

OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS FOR THE ERECTION OF PUBLIC BUILDINGS. PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 17, 1870.

SEALED PROPOSALS will be received for the following work and materials required in the execution of the WALNUT Street portion of the PUBLIC BUILDINGS, to-wit:—

For all the excavations, including the trenches for the foundations. The price to be stated per cubic yard, which is to cover all digging, hauling away the surplus earth, and cutting down and removing whatever trees may come in the way of the excavations, without extra measurement or allowance.

For taking down the terrace wall, cleaning the bricks, and piling them up adjacent to the buildings, breaking down the iron railings, the gate piers, the coping of the wall, and the steps and depositing them on the grounds, and removing all the rubbish occasioned by the same.

For furnishing and delivering large-size building stone, the price to be stated per perch of 23 cubic feet, measured in the walls. Also, for select building stone, averaging 3 by 7 feet, and from 12 to 18 inches thick; the price for the same to be stated per cubic foot, delivered on the ground.

For building in the cellar walls, and the outside walls of the basement story, as high as the level line of the pavement, according to the plans and specifications. The price to be stated per perch of 23 cubic feet, laid in the walls, without extra measurement, and to include all labor and all materials except stone.

For furnishing and delivering large-size building stone, the price to be stated per perch of 23 cubic feet, measured in the walls. Also, for select building stone, averaging 3 by 7 feet, and from 12 to 18 inches thick; the price for the same to be stated per cubic foot, delivered on the ground.

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OFFICE OF THE COMMISSIONERS FOR FAIRMOUNT PARK, No. 234 S. FIFTH Street, PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 17, 1870.

PROPOSALS for the privilege of running Park Carriages for the year 1870 from stands within the Park through its entire limits will be received at this office until the first day of February, 1870, at 10 o'clock A. M.

The conditions and stipulations upon which proposals will be received may be seen at this office between the hours of 9 A. M. and 5 P. M.

By order of the Committee on Superintendence and Police. DAVID F. FOLEY, Secretary Park Commission.

OFFICE OF THE SOUTH STREET BRIDGE COMMISSION, No. 224 S. FIFTH Street, PHILADELPHIA, Jan. 17, 1870.

Sealed Proposals for erecting a bridge over the River Schuylkill at South Street will be received at the office of the Commissioners for the erection of the bridge, No. 224 S. FIFTH Street, until 12 o'clock M. of the FIRST DAY OF MARCH, 1870.

By order of the Commissioners. DAVID F. FOLEY, Secretary.

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